

March 15, 2001

REINTRODUCTION OF THE BROKEN
PROMISES RETIREE HEALTH
COVERAGE ACT OF 2001

HON. GERALD D. KLECZKA

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2001

Mr. KLECZKA. Mr. Speaker, I am reintroducing legislation today, entitled the Broken Promises Retiree Health Coverage Act, which would assist our nation's retirees who face the unexpected loss of health care benefits promised by a former employer.

Thousands of hard-working retirees have been forced to cope with sudden cancellations and reductions of their health coverage over the past several years. In my hometown of Milwaukee, 750 retirees were left high and dry when the Pabst Brewing Company shut down its operations and cancelled retiree health coverage in 1996. Although they went to court and finally won a nominal prescription drug benefit, the loss of promised health coverage was a serious blow to their financial security. This treatment is not what retirees should get in exchange for many years of loyal service to their employer.

More recent events in Milwaukee underscore the pressing need for this legislation. Earlier this month, a bankruptcy court judge's decision left an additional 490 Milwaukee-area retirees plus their spouses and dependents of bankrupt Outboard Marine Corporation without any employer-promised health insurance.

Unfortunately, reports indicate that this problem will only get worse. Last year, the number of large firms with 500 or more employees offering health coverage for pre-Medicare-eligible retirees fell from 35 percent to 31 percent. This alarming statistic proves that coverage loss is not an isolated incident, but part of a disturbing national trend. As I reintroduce this measure in the 107th Congress, I renew my commitment to providing meaningful support to the retired workers and their families across the nation who have or will experience the tremendous loss of retiree health coverage.

My legislation would establish a safety-net for retirees. First, the bill would require employers to give at least six months notice to retirees about their impending loss of health coverage so retirees may be more prepared to handle the coverage loss, and if possible, seek other insurance options. To ensure the cancellations or reductions are lawful, the U.S. Department of Labor must certify that any changes to retiree health benefits meet the requirements of the collective bargaining agreement. Second, the bill ensures that health care options remain for those retirees over 55 by allowing retirees to either buy into the Medicare program or buy into their former employer's current health coverage plan until they turn 65 and become eligible for Medicare. Lastly, the bill would allow retirees, who did not sign up for Medicare or Medigap when they turned 65 years old, to apply for the programs without late-enrollment penalties.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation is critical to the retirement security of all American workers. I urge my colleagues to show their support for retired workers and their families by cosponsoring this bill.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

TRIBUTE TO CHIEF KARL
JOHNSON

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2001

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to ask that we all pause for a moment to remember Karl Johnson, a leader in the community of Grand Junction, Colorado who recently passed away at age 86. Karl spent 32 years of his life protecting the citizens of Grand Junction as a police officer. It is this life of service to his community, state and nation that I would now like to honor.

From 1954 to 1974, Karl served as the chief of police. During his 20 years he closed the door on corrupt activities and brought respect back to his police department. "He ran a tight ship and no scandals and that wasn't true of those before him," said Frank Spieker, a former Mesa County district attorney. It was no easy task to keep the department scandal-free for two decades, but according to Bob Evers, he was the leading force in restoring integrity to his department.

At the time Karl was police chief, there wasn't a Police Academy in the state of Colorado. Karl worked with the FBI to put on training sessions of officers in his department and from surrounding agencies. "He was a bit ahead of his time in that respect," said Vincent Jones, the FBI agent based on Grand Junction at the time.

Chief Johnson's yeoman's work in the Police Department was just one of many ways he served his community, said Terry Farina, who worked with him as a district attorney. After his retirement from the police department, Karl went on to win a seat on the city council and spent a year as mayor.

Mr. Speaker, Karl was a man of great character whose leadership and integrity left an impact on the Grand Junction Police Department that can still be felt today. For that, we are grateful.

It is clear, Mr. Speaker, that Grand Junction is a better place because of Karl's service. Though he will be missed greatly, Karl will not soon be forgotten.

CENTRAL NEW JERSEY RECOGNIZES OFFICER JACK BRYDEN

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2001

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Police Officer Jack Bryden of the Ewing Township Police Department, who was recently named Police Officer of the Year by the Kiwanis Club of Ewing. Throughout his nearly three decades of service to the people of Central New Jersey, Officer Bryden has made significant contributions to our community through his professional interaction with its many grateful citizens.

After 6 years of distinguished service in the United States Navy, aboard both the U.S.S. *George Washington* and the U.S.S. *T.A. Ed-*

son, Jack Bryden was appointed to the Ewing Township Police Department in 1973. During his career in the Ewing Police Department's Patrol Division, Officer Bryden has served as a firearms instructor. He is now assigned as an information officer and often acts as citizens' first contact with the police department.

Officer Bryden's professionalism and valor above and beyond the call of duty have made him the recipient of volumes of commendation letters for outstanding performance. As a result of his willingness to assist the public in all aspects of his interaction with those he protects, Jack has also received a number of letters of appreciation from community members. One of the crowning achievements of Officer Bryden's illustrious career was his aid in rescuing four people from a smoke-filled apartment and extinguishing of the potential blaze within, actions that demonstrate his courage in the line of duty. Jack was awarded the Ewing Police Department's Valor Award for his great bravery in the face of danger.

Clearly, Officer Jack Bryden is a great asset to both Central New Jersey and our nation. I urge all my colleagues to join me today in recognizing his dedication to law enforcement and to the people of my district.

CONGRATULATING BETTY
GALLINGHOUSE

HON. MARGE ROUKEMA

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2001

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate our good friend and a distinguished American, Betty Gallinghouse of Oakland, NJ, on receiving the 2001 Distinguished Service Award from West Bergen Mental Healthcare, Inc., a mental health treatment facility in my hometown of Ridgewood, New Jersey. This award is given each year to an "exceptional community leader," and Betty certainly meets that definition.

Betty has been an outstanding and committed volunteer at West Bergen Mental Healthcare since 1990 and is currently a member of the Board of Directors and chairwoman of the Development Committee. She has given selflessly of her time and effort in order to help West Bergen realize its mission of providing counseling and psychiatric services for individuals and families in distress. Known for her unparalleled efforts to help wherever possible, Betty is the No. 1 cheerleader and advocate for West Bergen and its patients.

Last year, Betty undertook her most ambitious project yet—the House and Garden Color Showhouse at the Havemeyer Mansion in Mahwah. This month-long event raised almost \$100,000 for the mental health center and drew more than 10,000 visitors.

In addition to West Bergen, Betty has been actively involved in numerous community organizations, such as the Oakland Library, the Oakland Planning Board, the Oakland Parent-Teachers Organization, the Girl Scouts and many others. She is active at her church, Our Lady of Perpetual Help. She also serves as president of the Bergen County Women's Republican Club.

This is not the first time Betty has been honored for her devotion to others. Last year, she received the prestigious Bergen County Volunteer Center Service Award.

Betty is an officer with Proteus International, a venture banking and consulting firm in Mahwah. She and her husband, Bob, have two sons, two daughters and four grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives to join me in congratulating this dedicated community volunteer for her many years of unparalleled service to her neighbors, our community and our American way of life.

MESQUITE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2001

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Mesquite Independent School District for their centennial anniversary on March 12. Since 1901, the leaders and educators have strived to create an outstanding record in education. They continue to work tirelessly to ensure academic excellence and accountability for students, teachers, and administrators. Enriching these efforts are the partnerships and strong support of parents and the community.

As a result, the students acquire important learning skills and a foundation of knowledge that will serve them throughout life. Mesquite ISD is one of the largest districts to achieve "Recognized" status as a result of President George W. Bush's education initiatives while he was Governor of Texas.

With 42 schools and over 30,000 students, it has exemplified how successful our nation's public school system can be. I congratulate Mesquite ISD for one hundred years of educational excellence.

TRIBUTE TO BILL AND CLAUDIA COLEMAN

HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2001

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to recognize Bill and Claudia Coleman for their gracious donation to the University of Colorado. On January 16, 2001, University of Colorado president Elizabeth Hoffman accepted their donation, the single largest gift ever given to an American University. The gift, totaling \$250 million dollars, will be used to establish the University of Colorado Coleman Institute for Congenative Disabilities. The program will fund advanced research and development of innovative technologies intended to enhance the lives of people with congenative disabilities.

Cognitive disabilities are associated with a number of conditions, such as mental retardation and developmental retardation. "This will

make CU the international center of excellence in developing adaptive assistance technologies, based on advanced biomedical and computer science research and computer science research, for people with congenative disabilities," Hoffman said.

Bill is the founder and chairman of BEA Systems of San Jose, California, and his wife Claudia, is a former manager with Hewlett Packard. An Air Force Academy graduate and former executive with Sun Microsystems, Bill said the idea for the donation came from a tour of CU's Center for LifeLong Learning and Design. Bill and Claudia are no strangers to congenative disabilities. They have a niece with the disability, and they understand the benefits and the promise new technologies offer.

The Coleman's plan to play an active role in the institute. They said the "incredibly strong" team of researchers at CU played a decisive role in the decision to give the University the endowment. "We have witnessed the challenges this population faces everyday with problem solving, reasoning skills and understanding and using language," Bill said. "I passionately believe that we as a society have the intelligence and the responsibility to develop technologies that will expand the ability of those with congenative disabilities to learn, to understand and to communicate," he added.

Mr. Speaker, this is an unprecedented gift by both Mr. and Mrs. Coleman. Their generosity and vision will help countless Americans now and in the future. For that, they deserve the thanks and praise of this body.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2001

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, on March 13 and 14, I was unable to cast my votes on rollcall votes: No 46 on motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 834; No. 47 on motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 223; No. 48 on motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 725 as amended; and No. 49 on motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 861. Had I been present for the votes, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall votes 46, 47, 48, and 49.

TRIBUTE TO CLARISSA WALKER AND DOROTHY WOOLFORK IN CELEBRATION OF WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

HON. MARTIN OLAV SABO

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2001

Mr. SABO. Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate the historic achievements of American women this month, I wish to recognize two very special women from my Congressional district—Clarissa Walker and Dorothy Woolfork. For more than three decades, they have selflessly served the African-American community in

Minneapolis through their work at Sabathani Community Center.

Ms. Walker—Sabathani's Family Resources Director—and Ms. Woolfork—a Sabathani civil rights activist—have tirelessly aided those in need in the south Minneapolis community that Sabathani Community Center serves. I admire both of these women for their selflessness in reaching out to others to enact true social change.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to tell you a little more about the life experiences that shaped Clarissa Walker and Dorothy Woolfork's beliefs, and helped them become the dedicated women of conviction they are today.

CLARISSA WALKER

A native of Kansas City, Missouri, Clarissa Walker settled in Minneapolis in 1955. Her service to the Twin Cities community began when she worked as an operating room technician at the University of Minneapolis Hospital.

In 1968, Ms. Walker was recruited to work for Sabathani Community Center as a youth supervisor. She quickly moved up the ranks, serving in various positions—social worker/counselor, assistant director, acting executive director, and agency director of the Center. In 1971, she earned a bachelor's degree in sociology. Since then she has done some post-graduate studies in business management, and has become a licensed social worker. Ms. Walker has served in her current position as director of the Family Resource program since 1985.

Through the years, Ms. Walker has worked diligently to enrich the Sabathani community in a number of capacities. She has donated much of her time to several important agencies and causes, including the Minnesota Extension Advisory Committee; the Neighborhood Reinvestment Regional Advisory Committee; the Second Harvest Food Bank Board; the United Way First Call for Help Committee; the First and Secondary Market Loan Committee; the Neighborhood Housing Services of America Board; and the Project for Pride in Living Board. She has also served as President of the Southside Neighborhood Housing Services Board President, and has served on the Central Neighborhood Improvement Association; the United Way Budget and Allocation panel; the Senior Citizen Advisory Committee to the Mayor; and the Lake Street Partners Board.

DOROTHY WOOLFORK

Dorothy Woolfork was born in rural Arkansas in 1916. The daughter of sharecroppers, she was taught the value of hard work and the importance of voting—both values she brought to Minneapolis when she moved there in 1939.

Upon arriving in Minneapolis, Ms. Woolfork learned about a neighbor who was returning to the South to teach, because Minneapolis did not hire black teachers. This experience, along with the prejudices she witnessed growing up in the South, inspired her to learn more about the political process.

Characteristically independent, Ms. Woolfork believes strongly in the collaboration of community involvement and government to make positive societal changes. She has demonstrated this belief by serving on several boards, including the Civil Rights Commission; the Board of Equalization; the Bryant Village Initiative; the Bryant Neighborhood Organization; and South Side Neighborhood Housing, Inc. Furthermore, she served for fifteen years on the Council of